

NAXOS

8.556607

Grieg
Mendelssohn
Handel
Mozart
Tchaikovsky
Chopin
Satie
Vivaldi
Dvořák
Beethoven
J.S.Bach
Massenet
Drdla
Torelli

DDD

Prelude

CLASSICAL FAVOURITES FOR RELAXING AND DREAMING

Your **PRELUDE** to those precious moments in life when you find peace and tranquillity brought to you by the most famous classical composers. Their best loved melodies come from the extensive Naxos catalogue of compact discs....

Edvard Grieg creates the mood with the gentle rocking *Cradle Song*, the final section of the incidental music he composed in 1876 for a production of Ibsen's play, *Peer Gynt*.

Born in 1809, thirty-four years before Grieg, **Felix Mendelssohn** was composing symphonies at the age of twelve. A brilliant pianist, a fine conductor, and a skilled administrator, throughout his life he composed a series of forty-eight piano works called, *Songs without words*, and many young pianist will have discovered the charming *Spring Song* in one of their early piano albums.

George Frederic Handel was born in Germany, but in 1710 he received such adulation in London, he decided to settle there, and served the Royal Court with distinction. In 1717 the King and his courtiers took a journey on the River Thames accompanied by a barge containing 30 musicians who were performing a new work by Handel, *The Water Music*. One of the large number of short movements is this charming *Air*.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and his sister were touring soloists before they were teenagers. In addition to his brilliance as a keyboard player, Wolfgang was writing music by the age of five, and in his short life composed a vast catalogue of works. The *Thirty-fourth Symphony*, dating from 1780, marked the final stage of reaching musical maturity.

Without his constant injection of adulation, **Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky**, fell into periods of depression. It was often left to the letters from a woman, whom he was never to meet, to supply the encouragement to keep him composing. From a man of such mixed and turbulent emotions came the greatest works of 19th century Russia. In 1876 he completed the *Sérénade mélancolique*, almost a trial for the Violin Concerto, its seductive melody so immediately attractive.

By the age of twelve **Fryderyk Chopin** had passed anything his teacher could impart, and until he went to the Warsaw Conservatory he was largely self-taught. He appears to have had no love for his native Poland, and in 1830 settled in Paris, a city that adored him. In 1838 he completed his set of *Twenty-four Preludes*. They are a wonderful exercise in compositions that cover all the key signatures in which music can be written. One particularly captured public attention, its crystalline cascades earning it the nickname, 'Raindrop'.

The bizarre and uncertain childhood of **Erik Satie** fashioned a rebel both in life and music. He was befriended by Debussy, who orchestrated two of his piano works called *Gymnopédie*, giving him the fame that led to him becoming part of the notorious group of composers, Les Six. On his death in 1925 his friends found a lodging room so impoverished that it contained little more than a table, chair, bed and a piano held together with string.

Antonio Vivaldi was the most prolific Italian composer in the early part of the 18th century. In recent times his music has entered the world of 'pop' classics with the atmospheric *The Four Seasons*. Among his vast catalogue are the twelve concertos called *L'estro armonico*, a series of works calling

for one, two and three solo violins. They were published in 1711, and contain this restful, *Larghetto*.

In 1891 **Antonín Dvořák** was invited to take the directorship of the National Conservatory of Music in New York. The annual salary was an incredible \$15,000, and though he hated leaving his native Bohemia, he threw himself into everything American when he arrived in New York. In 1893 he set to work on his twelfth string quartet which became known as the '*American*', the soaring violin melody in the slow movement, *Lento*, making this his best known quartet.

By 1784 the fortunes of the **Beethoven** family were in decline, and the fourteen-year-old Ludwig decided to take control of the family finances. With good fortune the young composer found a benefactor in Count Waldstein who sent him to Vienna to study with Haydn. Money was still in short supply, and he had to establish himself as a virtuoso pianist. The result was a brilliant piano concerto played at a concert in 1795. Though a success, he revised it several times before publication in 1801 as the *Second Piano Concerto*, with a graceful *Adagio* forming the second movement. The year 1801 was particularly happy for Ludwig. He had fallen in love with Countess Giulietta Guicciardi, and she was young and vivacious, providing the inspiration for many of his happy works including the fifth violin sonata given the name, '*Spring*', the *Adagio* a movement of pastoral beauty.

Johann Sebastian Bach, born in 1685, was part of a dynasty of musicians who worked in Germany for over two hundred years. He was to become the most famous, his massive output including the *Six Brandenburg Concertos* dedicated to Christian Ludwig, Margrave of Brandenburg. Each work

featured one or more members of the orchestra as soloist. The second concerto, probably written in 1713, has one of the composer's most graceful melodies in the *Andante*.

Playing the piano in cafés by day and percussion in the Paris Opera by night was not the beginning you expect for a famous French composer, but **Jules Massenet** had to earn a living with any work. He eventually found success late in life with his opera, *Manon*, first performed in 1884 when the composer was forty-two. Among his failures was the opera, *Le Cid*, though the ballet music became extremely popular, the attractive *Andalouse* forming the second part.

By the early part of the 20th century the piano had become part of any affluent home, the nimble fingers of daughters charming their parents. It was a time that saw a deluge of music, the Moravian composer, **František Drdla**, providing many popular works, the *Souvenir in D* being among his best known.

Giuseppe Torelli was the finest Italian string player of his time. Born in Verona in 1658, he was in demand as a top orchestral musician while still a teenager. His deep admiration for an outstanding young trumpet player, Giovanni Brandi, resulted in a series of concertos. As the tonal restrictions in those days made it difficult for a trumpet to sustain slow movements, the composer often gave a major part to a solo violin. In the 17th century the word *Sonata* was often used to designate a work we would now know as a concerto.

8.556601 **Clair de lune**

8.556602 **Vocalise**

8.556603 **Pavane**

8.556604 **Ballade**

8.556605 **Cantabile**

8.556606 **Andante**

8.556607 **Prelude**

8.556608 **Pastorale**

8.556609 **Sonata**

8.556610 **Berceuse**

8.556611 **Etude**

8.556612 **Elégie**

8.556613 **Sarabande**

8.556614 **Meditation**

8.556615 **Liebesleid**

8.556616 **Intermezzo**

8.556617 **Rhapsody**

8.556618 **Romanza**

8.556619 **Serenade**

8.556620 **Nocturne**

**CLASSICAL
FAVOURITES
FOR RELAXING
AND DREAMING**

8.5566607

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
UNAUTHORISED PUBLIC PERFORMANCE,
BROADCASTING AND COPYING OF
THIS COMPACT DISC PROHIBITED.
© 1986-90 NHH International Ltd.
© 1998 NHH International Ltd.

8.556607

DDD

Prelude

Total Time
74:06

CLASSICAL FAVOURITES FOR RELAXING AND DREAMING

- | | | | | | |
|----------|--|------|-----------|--|------|
| 1 | GRIEG
Cradle Song
CSSR State Philharmonic Orchestra /
Stephen Gunzenhauser (from Naxos 8.550140) | 3:59 | 9 | DVOŘÁK
String Quartet No. 12 in F major, Op. 96
"American" - Lento
Moyzes Quartet | 7:37 |
| 2 | MENDELSSOHN
Spring Song
Balázs Szokolay <i>piano</i> (from Naxos 8.550107) | 2:14 | 10 | BEETHOVEN
Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat major,
Op. 19 - Adagio
Stefan Vldar <i>piano</i> , Capella Istropolitana /
Barry Wordsworth (from Naxos 8.550121) | 9:03 |
| 3 | HANDEL
Water Music - Air
Capella Istropolitana / Bohdan Warchal
(from Naxos 8.550109) | 1:56 | 11 | BACH
Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F major,
BWV 1047 - Andante
Capella Istropolitana / Bohdan Warchal
(from Naxos 8.550047) | 4:01 |
| 4 | MOZART
Symphony No. 34 in C major, K.338 - Andante
Capella Istropolitana / Barry Wordsworth
(from Naxos 8.550186) | 6:57 | 12 | BEETHOVEN
Violin Sonata No. 5 in F major, Op. 24,
"Spring" - Adagio molto espressivo
Takako Nishizaki <i>violin</i> , Jenő Jandó <i>piano</i>
(from Naxos 8.550283) | 5:42 |
| 5 | TCHAIKOVSKY
Sérénade mélancolique
Mariko Honda <i>violin</i> , Slovak Philharmonic
Orchestra / Keith Clark (from Naxos 8.550124) | 9:54 | 13 | MASSENET
Le Cid - Andalous
CSR Symphony Orchestra / Keith Clark
(from Naxos 8.550086) | 2:46 |
| 6 | CHOPIN
Chrelude in D flat, Op. 28/15, "Raindrop"
Irina Zaritzkaya, piano (from Naxos 8.550225) | 6:36 | 14 | DRDLA
Souvenir in D
Balázs Szokolay, piano (from Naxos 8.550107) | 2:38 |
| 7 | SATIE
Gymnopédie II
CSR Symphony Orchestra (Bratislava) /
Ondrej Lenárd (from Naxos 8.550088) | 3:35 | 15 | TORELLI
Sonata No. 1 - Grave
Miroslav Kejmar <i>trumpet</i> , Capella Istropolitana /
Petr Škvor (from Naxos 8.550243) | 2:33 |
| 8 | VIVALDI
Concerto Op. 3, No. 2 in G minor
from L'Estro Armonico - Larghetto
Capella Istropolitana / Jozef Kopelman
(from Naxos 8.550160) | 3:15 | | | |

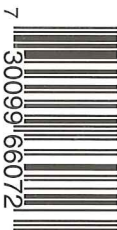
Collection previously issued as NIGHT MUSIC 7

Distributed by: MVD GmbH. Fax 089-66503210, e-mail mvd.gmbh@t-online.de

MUSIC NOTES: David Denton

Cover photo: Sutherlands Falls, Fiordland (New Zealand Tourism Board)

Design: Ron Hoares



3

5537

NAXOS

NAXOS

Prelude

8.5566607